

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 - 8 and 13 - 21 are pending.

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) for allegedly being anticipated by Japanese Patent Application No. 63-293532. Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) for allegedly being anticipated by Japanese Patent Application No. JP 11-202118. Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Japanese Patent Application No. 11-202118 and U.S. Patent No. 6,251,548 to Sega et al. Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Japanese Patent Application No. 63-293532 and Sega et al.

It is noted with appreciation that claims 1 - 8 and 13 - 21 are allowed. Claims 9 - 12 have been canceled without prejudice.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, this Application is believed to be in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,


George B. F. Yee
Reg. No. 37,478

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, 8th Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: 650-326-2400
Fax: 415-576-0300
GBFY:cmm
60038841 v1